

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 183831

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EAID, CG, BE

SUBJECT: BELGIAN PROPOSAL FOR MULTILATERAL ASSISTANCE TO
ZAIRE

REF: A) BRUSSELS 8901; B) BRUSSELS 8916
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1. BELGIAN GOVERNMENT'S "INFORMAL PAPER" OUTLINING A
PROGRAM FOR COORDINATING MULTILATERAL ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AID TO ZAIRE HAS BEEN REVIEWED BY APPROPRIATE
USG AGENCIES. WE ARE PLEASED TO SEE THAT BELGIAN
APPROACH CLOSELY PARALLELS LONG HELD VIEWS OF USG THAT
ASSISTANCE TO ZAIRE SHOULD BE CLOSELY TIED TO REFORM

AND PERFORMANCE BY GOZ AND THAT ZAIRE'S FRIENDS SHOULD COORDINATE THEIR ASSISTANCE AMONG THEMSELVES AND WITHIN FRAMEWORK SET BY WORLD BANK AND INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND.

2. FOR YOUR INFORMATION, ZAIRIAN COMMISSIONER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS NGUZA EXPLAINED NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH BELGIAN GOVERNMENT TO VICE PRESIDENT, SECRETARY VANCE AND OTHER SENIOR OFFICIALS DURING HIS JULY 27-28 VISIT TO WASHINGTON. DISCUSSING PRESIDENT MOBUTU'S NEW REFORM PROGRAM WITH SECRETARY, NGUZA ACKNOWLEDGED ZAIRE'S PAST MISTAKES AND

REITERATED SEVERAL TIMES THAT REFORMS ARE INTENDED TO OBTAIN DONOR CONFIDENCE AND, EVENTUALLY, GREATER EXTERNAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. IN THIS RESPECT, ZAIRIANS HAVE OBTAINED BELGIAN COMMITMENT TO SUPPLY SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS OF TECHNICIANS TO STAFF ZAIRIAN ECONOMIC PLANNING OFFICES (NATIONAL AND REGIONAL), THE CUSTOMS SERVICE, AND A NATIONAL FINANCIAL CONTROL OFFICE ("COUR DES COMPTES"). IN ADDITION, NGUZA SAID, BELGIUM HAD AGREED TO SERVE AS COORDINATOR OF MULTILATERAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AND APPROACH FRANCE, WEST GERMANY, USG, AND SAUDI ARABIA. OTHER COUNTRIES MIGHT BE CONTACTED LATER. NGUZA EXPLAINED TO SECRETARY VANCE THAT ZAIRIANS HAD ASKED BELGIUM TO ASSUME THESE RESPONSIBILITIES AS FRIENDLY COUNTRY MOST KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT ZAIRE AND ITS PROBLEMS.
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3. SECRETARY VANCE TOLD COMMISSIONER NGUZA THAT ANNOUNCED CHANGES APPEAR TO BE THE TYPE OF MAJOR REFORMS CALLED FOR, ADDING THAT THE ZAIRIANS HAD CHOSEN WISELY IN SOLICITING ASSISTANCE FROM BELGIANS WHO ARE ADMIRABLY SUITED TO GIVE THE TYPE OF ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE NEEDED.

4. FROM USG PERSPECTIVE, KEY ELEMENTS OF BELGIAN PROPOSAL ARE STATEMENT THAT "THE CURRENT SITUATION CALLS FOR MORE ADVANCED AND MORE CLEARCUT DIRECT COOPERATION THAN HAS BEEN THE CASE TO DATE, BETWEEN STATES, THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS INTERESTED IN COOPERATING WITH THE REPUBLIC OF ZAIRE "PLUS THE RECOMMENDATION THAT THE IBRD SPONSORED CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON AID TO ZAIRE BE UTILIZED AS THE MOST APPROPRIATE FORUM.

5. USG AGREES WITH THIS PERSPECTIVE, WITH SOME MODIFICATION. THE OPINION THAT "MORE ADVANCED AND MORE CLEARCUT COOPERATION" IS NEEDED IS ONE THE USG HAS LONG HELD. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS HAS ALREADY BEEN MADE IN ACHIEVING THAT GREATER DEGREE OF COOPERATION IN RECENT MONTHS AT THE CONSULTATIVE

GROUP AND PARIS CLUB MEETINGS. THE USG BELIEVES THAT COOPERATION CAN BEST BE FURTHERED AT THIS TIME BY MOVING FORWARD RAPIDLY TO IMPLEMENT THE PROPOSALS MADE AT THOSE MEETINGS. WE ARE, THEREFORE, HESITANT TO JUMP IMMEDIATELY TO A NEXT LEVEL, THAT IS, THE BELGIAN HINT OF ANOTHER CONSULTATIVE GROUP MEETING IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE (PARAS 6 AND 7 OF BRUSSELS 8901).

6. AS BELGIAN GOVERNMENT POINTED OUT IN ITS PAPER, THERE ARE THREE PENDING MULTILATERAL EVENTS TO DEAL WITH ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AND DEBT RESCHEDULING TO ZAIRE: THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP SUB-COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, FOR WHICH NO DATE HAS BEEN SET; THE NOVEMBER PARIS CLUB

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MEETING TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE 1978 DEBT RESCHEDULING; AND ANOTHER CONSULTATIVE GROUP FULL MEETING TO REVIEW ZAIRE'S FIVE YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN (1978-82) WHEN IT IS READY FOR EXAMINATION. BELGIUM IS NOW PROPOSING THAT BELGIUM, FRANCE, THE USG, THE UK, AND SAUDI ARABIA EACH APPOINT A DELEGATE TO PARTICIPATE IN A SPECIAL MEETING ON THIS WHOLE SUBJECT (PARAS 6 AND 7 OF BRUSSELS 8901). WE ASSUME THAT THIS MEETING OF "DELEGATES"--WHICH SHOULD INCLUDE AN IBRD REPRESENTATIVE--WOULD BE A FORM OF PLANNING SESSION FOR THE FULL CONSULTATIVE GROUP MEETING SUGGESTED IN PARA 12 OF THE BELGIAN "INFORMAL PAPER (BRUSSELS 8916.) FINAL USG VIEWS ON APPROPRIATE USE OF THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP WILL BE CONDITIONED ON REACTION OF THE WORLD BANK.

7. WE WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN BELGIUM'S PROPOSED SCENARIO, BUT SUGGEST THAT IT BE MORE CLEARLY DEFINED. FOR INSTANCE, THE DELEGATE PLANNING MEETING SHOULD NOT RPT NOT BE HELD BEFORE SEPTEMBER. IT SHOULDSCONCENTRATE ON PROGRESS WITH THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR WORK OF THE SUB-GROUP (SO THAT WE MAY LATTER DISCUSS THE FEASIBILITY OF ADDITIONAL SECTORAL SUB-GROUPS OF THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP) AND PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION OF THE PROPOSAL FOR A FULL CONSULTATIVE GROUP MEETING TO REVIEW THE ZAIRIAN FIVE-YEAR PLAN. AT THIS MOMENT, THE USG BELIEVES THAT THE FULL CONSULTATIVE GROUP MEETING SHOULD NOT BE HELD BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF NEXT YEAR, THEREBY PROVIDING TIME FOR REVIEW OF ZAIRIAN ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE THIS YEAR.

8. IN SUM THE USG IS INTERESTED IN THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT PROPOSAL TO EXPAND THE FORMAL COORDINATION ACTIVITY OF ZAIRE'S FRIENDS, AND IS PREPARED TO PARTICIPATE IN SUCH COORDINATION. USG PARTICIPATION INANY SPECIFIC PROPOSAL
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REGARDING ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE LEVELS, HOWEVER, IS ALWAYS
SUBJECT TO CONGRESSIONAL CONSULTATION AND AUTHORIZATION.
THE PROPOSAL FOR A PLEDGING SESSION, THEREFORE, IS NOT
ONE WHICH THE USG IS PREPARED TO ADDRESS AT THIS TIME.

9. WE HAVE NOT YET DESIGNATED ANY SPECIFIC CONTACT
OFFICERS FOR THIS PROJECT. BELGIAN AUTHORITIES MAY
ADDRESS THEIR COMMUNICATIONS THROUGH EMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO STATE'S OFFICE OF CENTRAL AFRICANAFFAIRS AND AID'S
OFFICE OF CENTRAL AND ANGLOPHONE WEST AFRICA AFFAIRS. CHRISTOPHER

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